Marcus, J.A.

[42nd + Broadway]

1929

1031 Knickerbocker Bldg.
42nd & Broadway
New York

Aug. 4, 1929.

Archeological Department,
Museum of Natural History,
City.

Gentlemen:

During my recent stay in the jungle of South Africa I picked up from an old Dutchman, who used to trade with native chiefs, a peculiar coin made of copper and some gold. I am told that this was the first medium of exchange used by the natives of South Africa. It is possibly hundreds of years old.

The curious thing one must ask is how did the natives know about the handling of the ore in order to smelt it and turn out the long stick with the head on it?

Before presenting it to a high official of the State, a friend of ours, I should like to know if there is any information on this subject in your institution. If desired, I shall be glad to call in person and bring the coin with me.

Thanking you for your early attention, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

J. A. Marcus

Referred to the Numismatic Society by the Department of Anthropology, American Museum.

August 15th, 1929.

Mr. J. A. Marcus,
1031 Knickerbocker Bldg.,
42d Street & Broadway,
New York City.

Dear Sir:

Your letter to the Metropolitan Museum of Natural History has been referred to me: I can tell you nothing about the gold piece that you mention. I know it was the custom among natives of Central Africa-that are now in French and Belgium possessions-commonly trade peculiar shaped iron pieces; also, copper and brass rings were extensively trases in. I know we have no information about such things in our museum. If you care to bring the pieces any Thursday or Friday, I will be pleased to examine it, and possibly be able to help you out a little.

Very truly yours,

Curator.